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Texas FFA Association names Childress' Graves top teacher

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The Texas FFA Association has named Russell Graves of Childress as the Agriscience Teacher of the Year.

Graves, a native of Dodd City and a 1993 graduate of East Texas State University, recently finished his eighth year at Childress High School.

The award, which emphasizes the inclusion of scientific principles within the agriculture classroom, is selected annually at the Texas FFA Awards and Degree Check on the campus of Southwest Texas State University in San Marcos.

Graves manages many research-oriented projects as an outgrowth of his agriscience program, including work on bobwhite quail, tornado destruction, game feeders and prairie dogs.

The most notable activity, the Black-Tailed Prairie Dog Research Project, won its division in the 1999 National FFA Agriscience Fair and has been featured in numerous magazine, newspaper, Internet and television outlets. The prairie dog activity has garnered more than \$15,000 in grants for the school.

As a result of the cutting-edge work, Graves' program attracts many non-

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traditional agriculture students who are drawn to the challenge of applying technical scientific skills to real world problems. His students have won numerous state and national contests and awards that are connected with the research.

Graves is also an award-winning professional freelance writer and photographer whose work has been published in many outdoor magazines and newspapers, including the Globe-News.

For more information on the agriscience research at Childress High School, visit their Web site at www.childressisd.net/wildlife.



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